BENGALURU, TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2025 www.Bangaloremirror.com 12 Pages PRICE ₹3

Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 26 | Min 21 | Humidity 85% Light rain Sensex 81,796 | Nifty 24,946 | Gold 99,789 | Silver 1,06,746 | Dollar 85.95 | Euro 99.66 | GBP 116.87

FULL TANK

As reservoirs across Cauvery are filling up due to copious rain, BWSSB says shadow of last year's drought receding

PAGE 4

BAN EFFECT

Earnings under threat as students doubling up as part-time bike taxi riders grapple with regulatory hurdles

PAGE 5

While over-eager to allow chopping of fully-grown healthy trees, BBMP forest dept does not show same enthusiasm when it comes to removing dry branches or dead trees to prevent mishaps, say citizens

PRECARIOUSLY POISED

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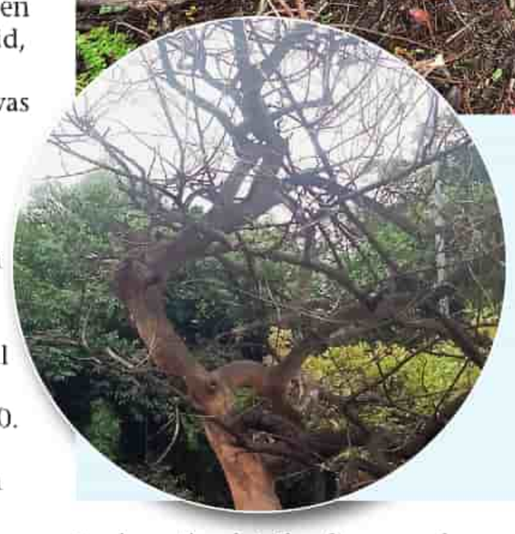

"Many tree branches are dangerously overhanging, posing a serious threat to pedestrians and two-wheeler riders. The BBMP and the BESCOM have failed to take timely action, despite the growing risk —Yatish M, a resident of Rajajinagar

Contractors hired by civic agency 'take money even to cut or remove fallen branches'

| Y Maheswara Reddy
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

After a HR professional suffered critical head injuries due to a branch fall while he was riding a scooter, all eyes are once again on Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Forest Department. The incident show the department has failed to pull up its socks to prove the purpose of its existence.

It is not for the first time hapless pedestrians and motorists have been injured in branch falls. Fayad Zahid, a voter, was killed when a tree branch fell on his head while he was stepping into a polling booth at Shivajinagar Junior College in August 2015. A BWSSB employee died after a tree fell on his car parked on the BWSSB premises, in Halasuru. In another incident, an eight-year-old girl was seriously injured when a dry tree branch fell on her at Kowdenahalli, near Ramamurthy Nagar in March 2020. A nine-year-old boy was injured when a tree branch fell on him on Nandidurga Road in December 2024.

And what does the BBMP Forest Department do? Instead of identifying old and dead trees in the city, it appealed to the public in May 2024 to share the details of trees and branches on the verge of collapse.

The BBMP Forest Department also engaged contractors to remove fallen trees, branches and remove dry tree branches and dead trees to prevent inconvenience to the pedestrians and to ensure the safety of unwary motorists and pedestrians.

Residents and pedestrians claim that the BBMP Forest Department has failed

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

Predators' playground

Experts discuss ways to make online spaces safer for children after study reveals rise in sexual exploitation and abuse on internet

| Atiya Firdos
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

After a year-long study across five districts in Karnataka raised serious concerns over the rise in online sexual exploitation and abuse of children (OSEAC), along with associated behavioural and mental health issues, officials stressed on the need to incorporate online safety in school syllabi and curb internet dependence.

The disturbing trend has emerged after children started spending significantly more time online post-pandemic.

The report, released on Friday at Vikas Soudha by the Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights in collaboration with ChildFund India, highlights how easy access to digital devices is making children, especially teenagers, more vulnerable to online threats.

The study, conducted in Bengaluru, Belagavi, Chamarajanagar, Raichur, and Chikkamagaluru, covered children between 8 and 18 years of age. Key findings reveal that 15–18-year-olds are the most active mobile users, with 80% using

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

THINGS TO DO

01 Literary luminary

'Remembering Dr HS Venkatesha Murthy', a conversation on Dr Murthy's literary contributions, is being organised as part of the Samskruti Sambhrama programme series.
Where: Indian Institute of World Culture, Basavanagudi;
When: June 18, 6 pm to 8 pm

02 Art for nature

Sublime Galleria is presenting 'Ethereal Charm' by Niladri Ghosh, encompassing forests and wildlife. Ghosh uses his art to highlight the importance of protecting nature.
Where: Sublime Gallery, UB City;
When: June 13 to July 6, 7 pm

03 Sketch saga

Indian Institute of Cartoonists is presenting 'Through the Eyes of RK Laxman', a tribute exhibition in 78 colourful caricatures. The evocative collection offers a rare glimpse into the keen wit and unmatched artistic observation of a man who, for decades, held up a mirror to Indian society with both humour and grace.
Where: Indian Cartoon Gallery, Sivanchetti Gardens;
When: June 7 to June 28

04 Show goes on

Tanariri Theatres is presenting 'Matsya Avatar', a story of love, survival, and the weight of choices in the face of disaster.
Where: Ranga Shankara, JP Nagar;
When: June 20, 7.30 pm

05 Boundless art

Free-floating, untethered, and massive in scale, Janarthanan Rudhramoorthy's magnificent metallic beings are taking centre stage in KYNKYNY's latest exhibition.
Where: KYNKYNY Art Gallery, Infantry Road;
When: May 30 to June 27, 11 am to 6 pm

Teachers raise alarm over SATS portal glitches

Delays have caused friction between schools and parents, resulting in confrontations and complaints, further demoralising teachers, says KAMS General Secretary

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Apart from administrative chaos, the glitches may directly impact student learning outcomes

School teachers across Karnataka have raised serious concerns over technical glitches in the Student Achievement Tracking System (SATS) portal, which they say are causing repeated delays in routine administrative tasks. In a formal letter to Dr Trilok Chandra, Commissioner of the Department of School Education and Literacy, Associated Managements of Primary and Secondary Schools in Karnataka (KAMS) highlighted the urgency of resolving these issues and called for an official clarification to be issued to parents.

OTP delays

KAMS General Secretary D Shashi Kumar said that the core of the issue lies in the delay or failure in receiving One-Time Passwords (OTPs) — a mandatory step for various tasks on the portal. "Procedures such as issuing Transfer Certificates (TCs), recording student attendance, and completing new admissions have all been disrupted due to the unreliable OTP system. Teachers report that OTPs often arrive too late to be useful or sometimes don't arrive at all, forcing them to waste valuable time retrying the same process multiple times," he said.

Misunderstandings escalate

He said that the delays have not just affected workflow but have also caused friction between schools and parents. The letter pointed out that parents often wrongly assume that school staff are at fault for the delays in issuance of certificates or processing admissions. This has led to confrontations and complaints, further demoralising teachers and administrative personnel. Without proper communication from the department, schools are bearing the brunt of technical failures they cannot control.

Teachers have termed the situation 'serious and sensitive,' urging immediate intervention to protect the academic environment and uphold the credibility of schools

Academic time being lost

Kumar highlighted that apart from administrative chaos, the glitches are now directly impacting academics, with teachers having to spend significant portions of their day trying to troubleshoot the SATS portal or coordinate with tech support. "This time should have been devoted to classroom teaching or lesson planning. The result is a drop in the quality of academic delivery, which could affect student learning outcomes if left unaddressed," he added.

Teachers' demands

To address the ongoing disruption caused by technical glitches in the SATS portal, the teaching community has made a three-point appeal to the Commissioner: issue an official press release to clarify that the delays are due to system errors and not the fault of schools, direct the technical team to urgently fix the OTP-related issues, and provide a standard notice for distribution through all schools to inform parents about the situation and request their cooperation. Teachers have termed the situation "serious and sensitive," urging immediate intervention to protect the academic environment and uphold the credibility of schools. They emphasised that only prompt action from the department can restore trust and ensure smooth functioning going forward.

6+ years and still waiting: Home buyers protest

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Hundreds of aggrieved home buyers staged a silent protest on Saturday against the inordinate delay in handing over of flats to them by the Shapoorji Pallonji Group and multiple extensions given by Karnataka Real Estate Regulatory Authority (KRERA) to the builder. The home buyers said that they were supposed to get flats at Parkwest Magnolia Tower 5 and 6 much before 2021, but COVID-19 came in the way facilitating the builder to get an extension from the KRERA.

The home buyers said that KRERA made them sign settlement agreements to get the flats by September 2024, but the builder failed to deliver the flats to the home buyers who have already paid 90 per cent of the amount.

"We have been waiting for more than six years to get the flats for which we have paid 90 percent of the total amount. We met the authorities of Shapoorji Pallonji Parkwest project but nothing has been done to expedite the completion of the construction," said Suraj Shanbhag, one of the home buyers.

Expressing concern over the delay, Chetan Ostwal, another home buyer, said that he paid 90 percent of the amount in 2018, and the builder was supposed to handover the flat to him by April 2022. "I paid the amount to the builder when my children were three to four years old. My objective was to facilitate my children enjoy the facilities available at Magnolia. I am not happy with the builder for the delay in completing Tower 6 and handing over the flats to the home buyers," said Ostwal.

Demanding the builder to complete the construction of Tower 5 and 6 as early as possible, Piyush Mehta, one of the home buyers, said that he booked a flat in Tower 6 during the year 2016 and the builder was supposed to handover the flat to him in 2020. "I am yet to get the flat till date. The KRERA has given three extensions to the builder but the construction is yet to be completed. I rented a flat at the adjacent tower and have been paying rent for six and a half years. I met the project manager but in vain," said Mehta.

Home buyers protesting the delay in completion of flats at Parkwest Magnolia Tower 5 and 6 in Binnypet

He said that home buyers wanted the builder to garner sufficient money to complete the pending work.

The home buyers said that they plan to organise a hunger strike on June 21 regarding their long-pending demands.

A Shapoorji Pallonji Real Estate spokesperson said, "We acknowledge the concerns raised by customers of Tower 5 and Tower 6 at Parkwest. We understand their anxiety and assure all stakeholders that we are fully committed to the completion and delivery of their homes."

The spokesperson said that they have engaged with resident representatives and have finalised a structured funding plan to meet the targeted completion date.

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345 RANK
M VAISHNAVI
APPL. NO. 2712204439

367 RANK
HEMANTH RATNAKAR
APPL. NO. 2712214178

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As Cauvery basin brimmeth over, B'luru can breathe sigh of relief

In light of last year's drought-like situation, BWSSB says rise in water levels across reservoirs is positive sign for city's drinking water needs, agriculture

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Jog Falls roars back as rains revive Sharavathi, restoring the casacade's mjestic and powerful flow

Bengaluru, which relies significantly on the Cauvery River for its water supply, has reason for optimism this year. Reservoirs in the Cauvery catchment area have shown a notable increase in storage levels compared to the same period last year, indicating a promising outlook for water availability.

The Hemavathi reservoir in Gorur, Hassan district, has seen a sharp rise in its storage—from 10.46 TMC in June 2024 to 24.91 TMC this year. Kabini reservoir near HD Kote taluk in Mysuru district has also shown marked improvement, increasing from 8.77 TMC to 15.02 TMC. Krishna Raja Sagar (KRS) in Mandya district has more than doubled its storage, going from 13.96 TMC last year to 30.84 TMC. Even the smaller Harangi reservoir in Kodagu has seen an upswing, from 3.22 TMC to 6.30 TMC.

Collectively, these Cauvery basin reservoirs now hold 114.57 TMC of water, a significant jump from 36.40 TMC recorded on June 15, 2024. Officials attribute this boost to a strong start to the monsoon, bolstered by pre-monsoon showers and upstream releases.

Across Karnataka, the state's major reservoirs show varied levels of storage as of June 15, 2025, with the Tungabhadra reservoir leading in percentage terms. It is filled up to 82% of its total capacity, holding 105.79 TMC out of 128.79 TMC. Close behind is Narayanapura with 77.9% capacity (49.45 TMC out of 63.5 TMC), followed by Almatti at 71.5%, storing 71.54 TMC against its total 100 TMC capacity.

> **"This uptrend in the Cauvery basin is a promising sign for agricultural, drinking water, and power generation needs downstream**
>
> –BWSSB official

Linganamakki, a major reservoir used for hydropower, currently holds 151.75 TMC, which is 46.1% of its 328.18 TMC capacity. Within the Cauvery basin, Hemavathi and Kabini are at 67.1% and 76.9% capacity respectively, reflecting the robust improvement over last year. KRS stands at 62.3% of its capacity, storing 49.45 TMC of water.

Other significant reservoirs include Bhadra at 58.3% (37.10 TMC of 63.5 TMC) and Harangi at 37.8%, holding 8.5 TMC in its total 22.5 TMC capacity. Supra and Varahi, both hydropower reservoirs, are at 38.9% and 26.8% respectively, according to data from the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre (KSNDMC).

However, not all reservoirs show encouraging figures. Among the Krishna basin reservoirs, Ghataprabha is at 41.4%, holding 51.00 TMC out of its 123.08 TMC capacity. Malaprabha and Vanivilas Sagar continue to trail behind with just 21.8% and 23.6% capacity respectively. Vanivilas Sagar currently holds 10.39 TMC.

A senior official from the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) said the rise in water levels across the Cauvery basin is encouraging, particularly in light of last year's drought-like conditions. "This trend is a positive sign for agriculture, drinking water supply, and power generation downstream," the official noted.

Looking ahead, the forecast brings more good news. Dr N Puviarasan, Scientist and Head of the Meteorological Centre, has predicted widespread rainfall across Karnataka on Tuesday. Coastal areas such as Uttara Kannada, Dakshina Kannada, and Udupi are likely to receive heavy to very heavy rainfall, accompanied by sustained winds of 40–50 kmph.

In North Interior Karnataka, Belagavi district may see isolated heavy showers, while other districts including Bidar, Dharwad, Haveri, and Kalaburagi can expect light to moderate rain with similar wind speeds. In South Interior Karnataka, Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru, and Kodagu are also likely to receive heavy to very heavy rain, with moderate showers forecast for Bengaluru Urban and surrounding districts.

BMTC's UPI ticketing push pays off with 42% surge

Digital ticketing adoption accelerates as BMTC's QR-based UPI payments simplify commuting and boost daily revenue transparency across Bengaluru's buses

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TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

In a major stride toward promoting a cashless ticketing system, the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) has witnessed a significant increase in digital payments, with UPI-based transactions now accounting for 42% of total ticket revenue.

To tackle the persistent issue of lack of change and simplify payments, BMTC recently introduced QR code-based UPI ticketing across its fleet. Since its rollout, the number of passengers opting for digital payments has steadily increased. While the initial goal was 30% adoption, digital transactions have now surpassed that mark and are nearing 50%.

According to BMTC officials, UPI ticket revenue rose sharply from ₹10 crore in January to ₹29.2 crore in May. With UPI now contributing 42% of the total ticket revenue, officials expect this figure to cross 50% by June.

> **"Initially, conductors resisted UPI due to lack of clarity; training resolved this, leading to a healthy surge in payments**
>
> – BMTC official

Passenger convenience improves as BMTC conductors now support hassle-free UPI-based ticketing

"Initially, the transition faced roadblocks from conductors, many of whom were hesitant to accept digital payments due to unfamiliarity with the system. "Although passengers were ready to pay using QR codes, conductors often insisted on cash," said a BMTC official. To overcome this, the corporation organised awareness drives and training sessions to familiarise conductors with the system and eliminate confusion.

"Now that most conductors have adapted to the new system, we're seeing a healthy surge in UPI payments," the official added.

BMTC earns around ₹3 crore in ticket revenue daily. The UPI share saw steady growth—₹19 crore in February, ₹21 crore in March, and ₹24 crore in April, before hitting ₹29.2 crore in May.

Officials say the digital shift is easing travel for passengers and improving transparency and operational efficiency, making BMTC a frontrunner in the digitisation of public transport systems.

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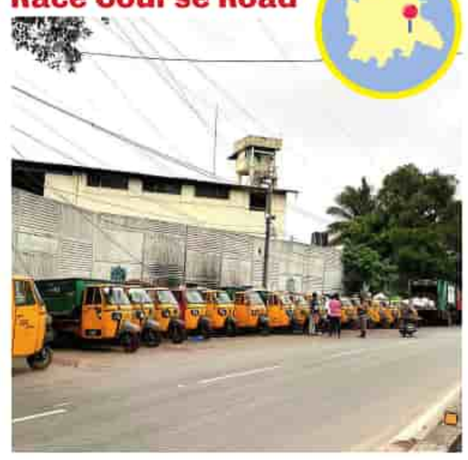
Garbage menace
Race Course Road



Residents of Race Course Road and Poornaprajna Road are urging the BBMP to relocate the garbage pickup point to its original spot near American Colony, before Gandhi Bhavan. Concerns are rising over health hazards, as leachate from crushed waste is spilling onto the roads, posing a threat especially to senior citizens and children.

Public nuisance
Jakkasandra

Piles of garbage dumped on the main road near Greenview Medical Centre in Jakkasandra are causing a public nuisance.

Clean sweep
Kaggadasapura

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Garbage pile-up
Kaggadasapura
Garbage continues to pile up on Kaggadasapura Road near CAIR, CV Raman Nagar. It's been a month—BBMP must act immediately.

Kaggadasapura Impact: After this area was featured in our column, swift action followed the spot has now been cleaned up, proving the power of public voice.

Bike Taxi Ban

Students struggle after bike taxi ban

Over 18% of city students who rely on bike taxi gigs for survival face uncertainty after the state decides against regulating the service

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Seized bike taxis linked to Ola, Uber, Rapido ran without valid permits

Around 18% of students from both undergraduate and postgraduate streams in the city are bike taxi riders. Particularly those from rural and economically weaker backgrounds are now grappling with uncertainty, as their primary source of income — part-time bike taxi riding — faces increasing regulatory challenges.

For students juggling lectures during the day and ferrying passengers during their free hours, bike taxi platforms like Rapido and UberMoto have been a financial lifeline. The flexible hours and quick payouts have helped many fund their college fees, pay for accommodation, and support daily living expenses without depending on their struggling families back home.

Recently, on Friday, the state government informed the Karnataka High Court that it has made a policy decision not to formulate any rules or guidelines permitting bike taxi services through transport technology platforms such as Ola, Uber, and Rapido.

"This work gives me a sense of financial freedom," said Shashank, a final-year BCom student at a private college. "Both my parents are working, and I have a sibling too. Managing day-to-day expenses along with studies becomes a burden for them. If I can earn on my own, even for small things like buying a notebook, I don't have to depend on them."

There are about 1,00,000 gig workers in Bengaluru and across the state. However, this survival route is now in jeopardy. Many of them started their journey with their own two-wheeler and earned enough to buy three meals a day and feed their families. They are now being affected by this decision. For students, this legal ambiguity has become a nightmare. Though there are other part-time job options, bike taxi riding felt convenient and feasible.

Vice President of the Bike Taxi Association, Anil Kumar, said, "Over 3 lakh people work as bike taxi riders, including students and IT professionals doing part-time work. Many come to Bengaluru without jobs and choose this as it needs no experience. We urge the government to introduce a policy. Food delivery aggregators have no clear regulations but aren't banned despite frequent traffic violations. Ironically, those with policies often break rules, while compliant workers are left without any policy support or protection."

"Uber will suspend bike taxi operations in Karnataka from June 16 following a High Court order. This impacts thousands who depend on it for transport and income. We'll continue working with the government to develop a progressive policy that ensures safe, accessible, and affordable mobility," said an Uber spokesperson.

Meanwhile, social media saw a wide debate. Some users supported the decision, while many opposed it. One user said, "Bike taxis are practical and economical for solo travel." Another wrote, "The government must revisit the ban and allow Rapido and others for last-mile connectivity, which is cheaper and more convenient than overpriced autos."

On Monday, while many people tried to book rides, they shared their frustration online. One person wrote, "Worst day ever, no auto guy is accepting the ride unless we add an extra amount. I had to pay ₹120 for the 1.7 km ride. Worst decision ever to ban bikes."

> **"This will affect thousands who depend on bike taxis daily—both riders needing affordable drivers who count on it as their primary source of income and support**
>
> –Uber spokesperson

Others pointed out, "Most of the bike taxis are on white board vehicles, which is illegal. It cannot be controlled by service providers. So, better to ban the bike taxis."

Another user added, "Instead of banning the bikes, taxis, dedicated lines to bikes and autos would definitely reduce traffic congestion and increase the average speed of travel." One user summarized, "Bengaluru needs autos and bike taxis. It is not either OR. Instead of empowering auto drivers and bike taxis, they make them fight against each other."

Woman alleges assault by Rapido bike rider

As bike taxi riders deal with a ban in Karnataka, a conflict between a Rapido rider and a customer has surfaced. On June 13 at BTM Layout, Shreya Vijay Kumar alleged that the rider slapped and abused her after she questioned his reckless driving. She said he violated traffic rules and used obscene language. A video of the incident surfaced on social media, following which she filed a complaint at Jayanagar Police Station on June 16.

An FIR has been registered under IPC sections related to assault and outraging the modesty of a woman. However, the rider, Suhas, claimed Shreya attacked him first. "She hit me twice with a tiffin box and was shouting loudly. I don't speak much English, so it was hard to explain," he said. CCTV footage reportedly supports Suhas' claim and is being examined by police for further investigation. — BMB

15 bike taxis seized in Rajajinagar raid

After the bike taxi ban came into effect, RTO officials seized 15 bike taxis in Rajajinagar on Monday. Despite the ban, illegal operations continued in areas like Rajajinagar and Yeshwantpur. The seized vehicles were linked to platforms such as Ola, Uber, and Rapido, which were operating without valid permits.

The Karnataka High Court had earlier refused interim relief to these platforms, supporting the state's decision to prohibit unauthorised bike taxis. Following this, the Transport Department ramped up enforcement efforts and warned that more such drives would be conducted across Bengaluru.

Officials stated that the move aims to regulate urban transport and ensure commuter safety. The seized bikes have been impounded, and legal proceedings have begun against the violators as part of the ongoing crackdown on illegal bike operations. — BMB

IN BRIEF

Bird hit by metro between two stations

A peahen died on the metro track between Magadi Road Metro Station and Balagangadharanatha Swamiji Station on Monday afternoon after it was hit by the train. According to the riders, the pilot applied the brakes after they spotted the bird on the track.

"A few minutes after leaving Magadi Road Metro station, the train came to a screeching halt. Passengers assumed that there was a track-related issue. However, the service resumed within 15 seconds," said a commuter.

However, BMRCL confirmed that the pilot could not save the bird, and the train hit her.

"The bird was hit and died on the spot. However, train service was not impacted and resumed immediately after the accident," said BMRCL. — BMB

School children's safety at serious risk

In a special drive conducted on Monday morning, traffic police cracked down on school vehicle drivers operating under the influence of alcohol, raising serious concerns about student safety.

The drive, held between 7.00 am and 10.00 am across various locations in the city, involved checks on a total of 4,559 school vehicle drivers. Shockingly, 58 of them tested positive for alcohol consumption.

Officials confirmed that all 58 offenders were immediately prosecuted under the Indian Motor Vehicles (IMV) Act. Furthermore, the driving licences (DLs) of the concerned drivers have been forwarded to the respective Regional Transport Offices (RTOs) for suspension.

The drive comes as part of a broader initiative to ensure the safety of school children and to enforce strict compliance among transport service providers. Police officials have urged that such checks will continue in the coming weeks to maintain a zero-tolerance approach towards drunken driving. — BMB

Speeding truck kills young dancers near Kunigal

Two young dancers lost their lives after a speeding truck rammed into their bike near the Kunigal bypass service road junction on the Bengaluru-Tumkur highway in the early hours of Monday. The accident occurred under the Nelamangala traffic police station limits.

The deceased have been identified as Prajwal (22), a resident of Shrirampur, and Sahana (21), a resident of Laggere. Both were returning home after attending a dance performance in Kunigal.

According to the police, the accident took place around 12.30 am. A speeding truck heading from Bengaluru to Tumkur hit their two-wheeler from behind while they were travelling on the service road. The impact caused the duo to fall onto the road, after which the truck allegedly ran over them, resulting in their instant death.

Alarmed by the incident, passersby immediately alerted the police. Officers from the Nelamangala traffic police station rushed to the spot and shifted the bodies to the mortuary for postmortem.

Authorities have confirmed that the truck involved in the accident has been seized and the driver is currently in police custody. Preliminary reports suggest rash and negligent driving as the cause of the accident. Police have registered a case and further investigation is underway to determine the exact circumstances leading to the fatal crash.. — BMB

Electric jolt in the wild as 4 jumbos struck down this year

Despite repeated warnings and court orders, elephant electrocutions continue unchecked due to poor enforcement and missing post-mortem transparency

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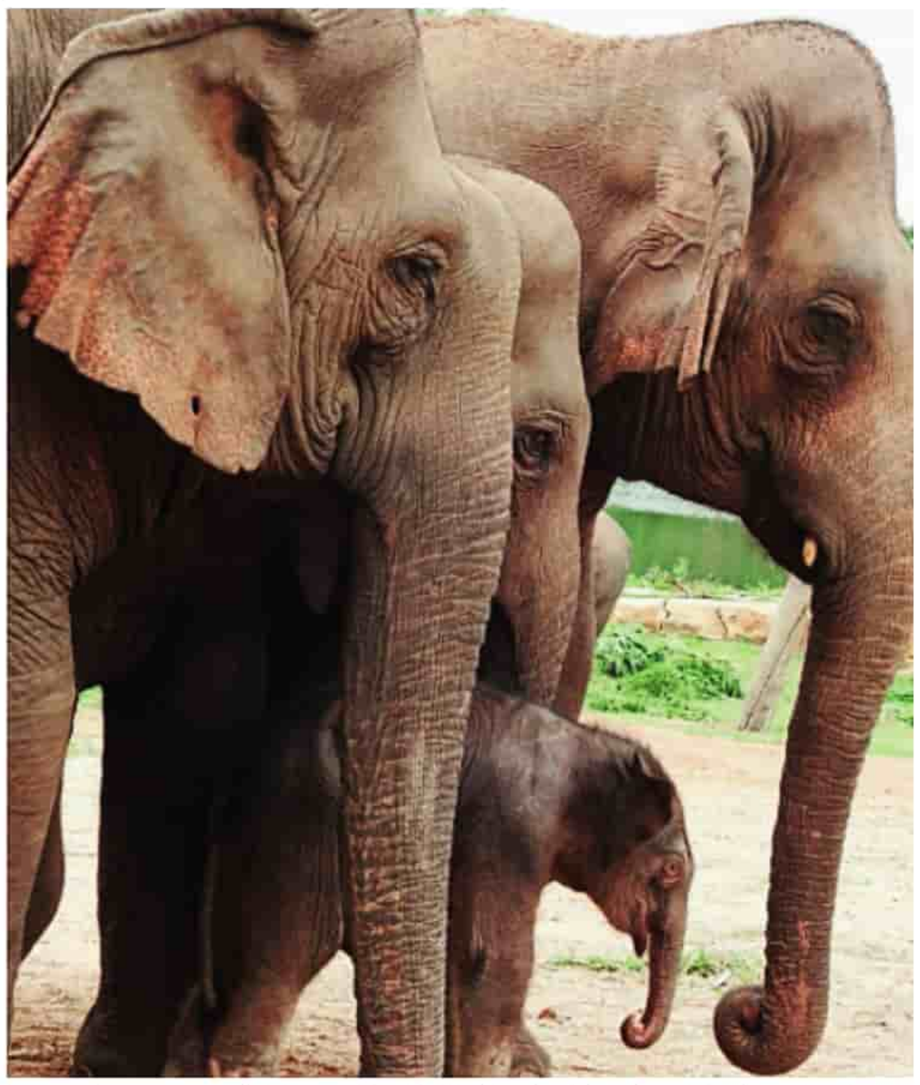
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR



Forest department blamed for failing to enforce anti-electrocution measures in elephant corridors

Karnataka elephants' tryst with illegal electric fences and sagging power lines continues. Between January and May this year, the state has already lost four elephants due to electrocution—marking a four-fold increase compared to the same period last year, when only one such death was recorded. The growing toll paints a grim picture of the persistent threat posed by unsafe power infrastructure and illegal fencing across Karnataka's elephant habitats.

From January 2021 to May 2025, a total of 47 elephants have died due to electrocution in the state. The year-wise tally reveals 12 deaths in 2021, nine each in 2022 and 2023, and a concerning rise to 13 in 2024. This year's numbers are already adding up, with conservationists confirming that a couple of electrocution deaths occurred after May, bringing the total close to 50.

Experts warn that these deaths are not isolated incidents but part of a larger pattern of negligence. "Even a single elephant's death due to electrocution is a matter of concern. Here, on average, we have one death due to electrocution every month," said a wildlife conservationist, urging for more rigorous patrolling by the Karnataka Forest Department in coordination with electricity supply companies (ESCOMs).

In total, 59 unnatural elephant deaths have been recorded in Karnataka between January 2021 and May 2025. These include fatalities from electrocution, gunshots, road and train accidents, and snaring. Despite past meetings between the Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) and ESCOMs—especially in 2023 following media reports on increasing electrocution deaths—the situation remains largely unchanged.

In May 2025, the Karnataka High Court disposed of a suo-motu petition it had filed in June last year based on a media report published in Bangalore Mirror on June 13, 2024. The court directed the state government and KFD to form area-wise investigating committees to identify and map sagging power lines and illegal electric fences that could pose risks to wildlife. Conservationists argue that unless such judicial orders are implemented and accountability is enforced, no real change will occur.

> **"Even a single elephant's death from electrocution is concerning; with one death monthly, KFD-ESCOM patrolling needs to be more rigorous**
>
> –Wildlife conservationist

"There have been several orders from the court, including those asking for tourism in high-conflict zones to be phased out. But those were never followed through. Unless there's action for non-compliance, the department won't lift a finger," the conservationist added.

Adding to concerns is the lack of transparency in reporting elephant deaths. Despite a 2022 directive requiring the ICT wing of the forest department to upload post-mortem reports within 24 hours of death confirmation, these records remain largely unavailable in the public domain. For 2025, not a single report has been published, and reports from previous years are also incomplete—raising serious questions about wildlife protection..

Stick to 120-day deadline

The Karnataka High Court has ruled that for commercial disputes, written statements under Order VIII Rule 1 of the Code of Civil Procedure must be filed within the 120-day limitation period, with no exceptions permitted.

The court dismissed the petitioner's contention regarding the acceptance of time extension applications filed before the 120-day deadline. The court stated, "The said submission, to say the least, is preposterous."

To clarify its stance, the court provided an example: "As an illustration, if the defendant who has not filed the written statement in a commercial O.S., files an application on the 119th day and seeks time, no Court including this Court cannot extend the mandate of the statute qua the limitation in filing the written statement."

Order VIII of the CPC stipulates: "Written statement. - The defendant shall, within thirty days from the date of service of summons on him, present a written statement of his defence: Provided that where the defendant fails to file the written statement within the said period of thirty days, he shall be allowed to file the written statement on such other day, as may be specified by the court, for reasons to be recorded in writing and on payment of such costs as the court deems fit, but which shall not be later than one hundred twenty days from the date of service of summons and on expiry of one hundred twenty days from the date of service of summons, the defendant shall forfeit the right to file the written statement and the court shall not allow the written statement to be taken on record." **–BMB**

BM Trippin' Tales — Consumer Connect Initiative

Malnad's monsoon majesty turns perilous for adventures

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TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

Malnad's monsoon beauty attracts tourists, but rising accidents from ignored warnings prompt officials to restrict access for public safety

Malnad, a paradise on Earth, is a nature lover's haven, with mist-kissed mountains, milky-white waterfalls, ever-flowing rivers, lush green forests, and thriving wildlife habitats. Every step in this region seems to conceal a new mystery, and during the monsoon, Malnad transforms into a breathtaking slice of heaven. However, amidst this serene beauty, even a moment of carelessness can prove fatal.

As monsoon rains sweep across Karnataka's Western Ghats, popular destinations such as Kodachadri, Chikkamagaluru, Mullayanagiri, Bababudangiri, and Kuduremukh come alive with tourists. Winding ghat roads like Charmadi, Shiradi, Bisile, Agumbe, and Hulikal unveil postcard-worthy vistas, drawing nature lovers and adventurers alike to witness the green spectacle.

Yet, this seasonal charm brings its own share of dangers. Torrential downpours swell rivers, intensify waterfalls, and create sudden hill streams that surge down with alarming force. Many enthusiastic tourists, lured by the beauty, have drowned in unpredictable currents or lost their footing on slippery trails and cliffs.

Despite warnings, thrill-seekers flock to waterfalls, often underestimating the dangers of slippery rocks and strong currents

Fatal accidents often occur when basic safety is overlooked, taking selfies at precarious edges, underestimating water force, or trekking without proper gear or guidance. In several instances, visitors have gone missing for days or suffered severe injuries after losing their way in dense forests.

To minimise risks, local administrations impose restrictions on access to certain spots during peak rains. Warning boards and barricades are erected, and forest and police officials patrol vulnerable zones. However, thrill-seekers frequently ignore these alerts, sometimes with tragic consequences.

Driving through Malnad during the monsoon also demands vigilance. Wet, narrow ghat roads, reduced visibility, and unexpected curves can easily turn deadly. Several bikers and motorists unfamiliar with the terrain have lost control, resulting in serious or fatal mishaps.

Malnad's monsoon is a sight to behold wild, vivid, and unforgettable. But the region demands more than admiration; it requires responsibility. Respecting nature's might is the only way to truly enjoy the magic it offers.

Unemployment rate rises to 5.6% in May

Female joblessness higher at 5.8%

INFOCUS UNEMPLOYMENT

The rate of unemployment in the country, measured in monthly term, rose to 5.6 per cent in May from 5.1 per cent in April this year mainly due to seasonal variation, showed the government data released on Monday.

Earlier last month, the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation released the first monthly Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) as part of efforts to monitor the proportion of unemployed people among those eligible for jobs in the country in real-time.

The latest data collected in the current weekly status (CWS) showed that the unemployment rate (UR) for persons of all ages during May 2025 rose to 5.6 per cent from 5.1 per cent in April 2025. The pace of joblessness among females was higher at 5.8 per cent compared to 5.6 per cent in males at the country level in May 2025. Joblessness among those in the age group of 15-29 increased to 15 per cent in May from 13.8 per cent in April 2025 across the country.

The rate of unemployment in urban areas rose to 17.9 per cent in May from 17.2 per cent in April, while it was 13.7 per cent in the month under review up from 12.3 per cent in the previous month in rural areas. CWS refers to the activity status determined on the basis of a reference period of the last 7 days preceding the date of the survey. In rural areas, employment shifted away from the primary sector (agriculture) (from 45.9 per cent in April to 43.5 per cent in May 2025) to the secondary and services sectors, it noted.

Reduction in agricultural activities with the end of Rabi harvest season for both males and females in the rural areas may have brought about the downward shift in number of workers, it stated.

In urban areas, changes were more marginal with slight declines in own account workers and casual labourers, affecting workforce numbers, it stated.

The study further showed that the unemployment rate (UR) among women in the age group of 15-29 also increased to 16.3 per cent in May from 14.4 per cent in April across the country (rural+urban).

The joblessness rate also increased to 24.7 per cent in May from 23.7 in cities in April and to 13 per cent in the month from 10.7 per cent in villages in April.

Joblessness among men aged 15-29 years was recorded at 14.5 per cent in May from 13.6 per cent in the country.

It also increased to 15.8 per cent in May from 15 per cent in cities in April and rose to 14 per cent from 13 per cent in villages.

The data also showed that Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) among people aged 15 years and above dipped to 54.8 per cent in May 55.6 per cent during April 2025.

The participation rate in rural areas also came down to 56.9 per cent in May from 58 per cent in April and also declined to 50.4 per cent in the month from 50.7 per cent in urban areas.

LFPR among males aged 15 years and above also came down to 78.3 per cent in May from 79 per cent in April. A decline in female LFPR, especially in rural areas (more than 1 percentage point) was due to fewer women working as casual labourers and unpaid helpers, it stated.

The decline in LFPR and WPR and the rise in UR were driven largely by seasonal agricultural patterns, higher summer temperature experienced in May in some parts of the country due to which physical outdoor work gets limited and movement of some unpaid helpers to domestic chores, especially in the higher income (top 3 decile) rural households, it explained. —PTI

HORROR IN THE SKIES

AI crash: 99 victims identified

Four days after the horrific crash of an Air India plane claimed 270 lives, 99 victims have so far been identified through DNA matching and 64 bodies, including that of former Gujarat chief minister Vijay Rupani, were handed over to their families, officials said.

Rupani was among the 242 passengers and crew members on board the London-bound Air India flight AI-171 that crashed in Ahmedabad on June 12. His mortal remains were handed over to his wife Anjali Rupani and other family members at the city civil hospital.

Authorities are carrying out DNA tests to establish the identity of the victims as many bodies were charred beyond recognition.

"Till now, 99 DNA samples have been matched, and 64 bodies have already been handed over to the respective families. These deceased were from different parts of Gujarat and Rajasthan," civil superintendent told reporters. PTI

Smoke from wheels stalls Haj flight

A Saudia Airlines plane from Jeddah carrying 242 Haj pilgrims caused an alarm at the airport in Lucknow on Sunday when smoke and sparks were detected from its wheels while landing, according to sources.

The Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) team acted swiftly to contain the smoke, preventing any damage to the aircraft. All passengers were safely deboarded and flight operations continued at the Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport.

UP's Minister of State for Minority Welfare and Chairman of the Haj Committee said on Monday that there was a "slight technical problem as some sparks were noticed from the wheel of the aircraft after landing." "There was no problem during the journey," he said. PTI

Bomb threat diverts flight

A Lufthansa flight to Hyderabad that was forced to make a U-turn and return to land at Frankfurt Airport due to a bomb threat is now en route and scheduled to land in the Telangana capital on Monday night local time, the airline said.

"The flight took off and is expected to land at 23:18 hrs," Lufthansa said in response to a query.

Flight tracker website Flightaware.Com data shows Sunday's aborted flight was en route to Rajiv Gandhi International Airport in Hyderabad.

Flight LH752 had earlier departed from Germany on Sunday afternoon local time and was scheduled to land at the Hyderabad airport in the early hours of Monday. PTI

Mid-air technical issue

An Air India flight from Hong Kong to Delhi had to turn back mid-air on Monday after the pilot noticed a possible technical issue.

The aircraft, a Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, had already departed from Hong Kong and was enroute to Delhi when the issue was detected, sources confirmed.

The flight landed safely back in Hong Kong, and no injuries have been reported.

The exact nature of the technical problem has not been disclosed yet. IANS

'Sexual assault charge against father due to custody dispute'

The Karnataka High Court has upheld the trial court's decision to acquit a man accused of sexually assaulting his minor daughter, following a complaint filed by the wife of the accused. A division bench comprising Justice Sreenivas Harish Kumar and Justice KS Hemalekha dismissed the appeal by the wife, stating "The fact that the wife (PW.4) met various NGOs, doctors and legal professionals before the alleged triggering incident on 13.06.2012 raises a serious question about the credibility of the report she filed on 14.06.2012. This timing suggests that she has been preparing to initiate legal action or build a case regardless of any specific incident on that day."

According to the complaint, the man allegedly committed sexual assault on their minor child in April 2010, the last week of May 2012, and on June 13, 2012, when the child was 3 years and 10 months old. The trial court acquitted the accused, concluding that the case originated from marital discord. It determined that the complainant had utilised the child to prevent the accused from leaving the country, seeking assistance from NGOs for financial and other support.

The trial court noted that evidence collection began before the complaint was filed. Upon examining all oral and documentary evidence, the court concluded that the prosecution failed to prove the charges beyond reasonable doubt.

The complainant challenged the acquittal, arguing that her cautious approach was reasonable given that the suspect was her husband. She maintained that seeking clarification before approaching police was prudent rather than indicative of malice.

The accused contested the appeal, highlighting that the prosecution relied solely on PW.4's testimony. He noted their strained marital relationship and argued that the complaint stemmed from disputes over child custody.

The defence emphasised the significant delay between the alleged 2010 offence and the June 2012 complaint. They also pointed out that the househelp's unrecorded testimony significantly weakened the prosecution's case regarding the June 13, 2012 incident. The court examined the evidence and identified PW.4 and victim (PW.23) as key witnesses, acknowledging that convictions can be based on a single credible testimony. Upon reviewing the wife's evidence, the bench stated, "The admission by PW.4 such as the accused taking the family for outings, the victim's medical condition being diagnosed as urinary tract infection, and treatment by PW.17 raises doubt about the allegation of sexual abuse, particularly the medical records support an alternative, non-criminal explanation for the victim's symptoms." The court noted that medical evidence from independent doctors showed no conclusive signs of sexual abuse. The DNA evidence presented inconsistencies, and the failure to examine the house help created a significant evidential gap. The victim's testimony was deemed unreliable due to inconsistencies and admitted coaching by her mother. —BMB

Step up to protect B'luru's trees and citizens

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

miserably to make the contractors do the work they were brought on board for. They said the people engaged by the contractor demand money even to cut and remove fallen trees at residential areas.

They said the BBMP Forest Department officers were always proactive in giving permission to cut well-grown trees and apathetic to removing dead trees and dry branches from the trees.

One can see dry tree branches and dead trees on the city roads. For example, a tree was dead long ago on Dr BR Ambedkar Street, opposite the Institution of Engineers. A dry tree branch is seen hanging precariously at the Coffee Board Junction. Several trees on CMH Road have died and are hollow inside and dry tree branches pose danger on Jeevan Bhima Nagar Main Road.

"Many tree branches are dangerously overhanging, posing a serious threat to pedestrians and two-wheeler riders. The BBMP and the BESCOM have failed to take timely action, despite the growing risk," said Yatish M, a resident of Rajajinagar.

Expressing concern over the apathy of the BBMP Forest Department, Cambridge Layout

The condition of a tree adjacent to BEML Comound near GM Palya; The condition of a tree on 5th Cross of Cambridge Layout

Residents' Welfare Association president Srinivasa Murthy said that a dead tree on 5th Cross, Cambridge Layout poses danger to pedestrians and motorists.

"The BBMP Forest Department officials must inspect the tree and take necessary action," said Murthy. Vinod Jacob of Namma Bengaluru Foundation said that it seems the BBMP Forest Department is not looking at the weather report.

"As we enter the monsoon with heavy rain and strong winds, there's a serious risk of tree and branch falls. This season poses serious risk in tree falls and branches falling if we don't look at maintaining the trees in Bengaluru.

Yet, there's no urgency in tree maintenance. We need routine inspections by contractors, and I strongly suggest the forest department collaborate with the fire department in each zone during the monsoon to prevent accidents. We have the resources — it's about pooling them to protect both our city's green assets and citizens' lives," said Vinod Jacob.

Meanwhile, BBMP Deputy Conservator of Forests BLG Swamy said that 30 teams of tree cutters have been working in the city to remove fallen trees, tree branches, dead trees and dry tree branches.

"I have instructed them to remove dead trees and dry tree branches. I will instruct my subordinates to monitor the contractors engaged for tree cutting," he said.

'Efforts underway to ensure safety of over 150 Kannadigas in Iran'

Indo-Iran Chamber of Commerce & Industry President Syed Hakim Raza on Monday assured that active coordination is underway with the Indian Embassy in Tehran to ensure the safety and well-being of Kannadigas currently residing in Iran.

More than 150 to 200 individuals from Karnataka - including students, families, and business travellers - are presently in Iran, primarily in the cities of Qom, Tehran, and Mashhad.

Speaking to IANS, Raza said: "We are in close coordination with the Indian Embassy to facilitate the safety and possible repatriation of Kannadigas. My representative, Mannand Raza, who is also a director at the Indo-Iran Chamber and associated with an NGO, is currently in Qom and actively overseeing the situation."

He elaborated that a large number of Kannadigas in Iran consist of students - particularly those studying medicine and religious courses.

"From Karnataka alone, there are over 15 MBBS students. Additionally, more than 30 individuals have gone there for religious studies, some accompanied by family members. Several others are engaged in business activities," he said.

Raza revealed that the highest concentration of Kannadigas is in Qom, a city known for its religious institutions and considered relatively safer than other parts of Iran.

"The majority of them are in Qom. Some are also in Tehran and Mashhad, but these three cities are the key centres," he said. He added that the Indian Embassy has taken proactive steps to ensure the safety of the students and citizens.

"The Embassy has arranged buses in coordination with local NGOs and university authorities. For instance, more than 10 students from Karnataka are currently studying in various Iranian universities, including Tehran University and Iran University of Medical Sciences," he noted.

"A bus arranged by the Embassy has left for Qom. The journey to Tehran from Qom usually takes around two hours. Since Tehran is currently considered less secure, efforts are being made to relocate students and other Indian citizens to safer zones like Qom," Raza told IANS.

According to Raza, Qom hosts more than 60 per cent of the international student population in Iran and is recognised as a hub for religious studies.

"This makes Qom a relatively peaceful and safe place for students. The Embassy has also arranged for temporary housing in safe locations through NGOs. These places are well-equipped to handle the needs of the students until further arrangements can be made," he said. **IANS**

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, BHASKAR AKANKSHA, W/o Vishal Raj Addigi, D/o Haribabu Bhaskar, Aged about 38 years, Residing at Plot No.182, 7th Cross, SJ Green Meadows, Phase III. Near Cars 24, Kambalipura Village, Sidlaghatta Road, Hasigala Post, Hosakote Taluk, Bangalore Rural District-562114. Have Changed My Name From AKANKSHA HARI BABU BHASKAR To BHASKAR AKANKSHA. Vide Affidavit Dated 12.06.2025 before Advocate & Notary R.JYSHREE. Bengaluru

I Dhanalakshimi U W/O, Nandakumar S M R/o #22, 2nd Floor, 1s Main , 2nd Cross, Govinayakanahalli, Kumaraswamy Layout Bangalore-560078 want to announce that my name in SSLC marks card is miss spelled as Dhanalakshimi U and my correct name is Dhanalakshmi U as per my Aadhar card.

I Keerthisha Ganesha Bhatta S/o, Ganesha Bhatta.S.V. Residing At, Flat No A 201, 2nd Floor Value Plus Apartment, Anjanapura 100 Feet Road, Off Kanakapura Main Road, Narayana Nagar 1st Block, Doddakallasandra, Bengaluru 560062 have changed my name to Keerthish Ganesha Bhatta for all purposes.

I, Jayant Kumar Tanti s/o Sunil Tanti R/o 354-355 RJ meadows, S-02, 3rd flr, 8th cross, Pavamana Nagar, South Avenue, Gottigere, Bengaluru 560083 have changed my name to Jayant Tanti Affidavit Dt.16/06/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I Pranavanandareddy Hanumareddy, S/o Hanumareddy, R/o No 419, Mallamma Building Gollahalli, Electronics City, Bengaluru-560100 have changed my name to Pranavanandareddy for all purposes.

I Shraddha Pauskar w/o Vinay Revankar, R/o #11, Ganapoorna Nilaya, New Mico Layout, Hongasandra, Bengaluru have changed my name from Shraddha Chandan Pauskar to Shraddha Pauskar for all future purposes.

I Kriti Bajaj Agrawal D/o Rajesh Bajaj R/o A202 Temple Tree Apartment Narayanappa Garden Whitefield, Bangalore have changed my name from Kriti Bajaj to Kriti Bajaj Agrawal for all future purposes

I Nayeemulla Shariff S/O, Dawood Shariff R/o No 07, 2nd Floor, Eswari Enclave Appt, 8th Cross, Sultanpalya Main Road, Bengaluru - 560032 have changed my name to Nazimulla Shariff.

I, Manikanda Muthu Rathinam A R/o 38/8 Ground Flr 8th Main Bsk 1st Stage 2nd Block, Near Ganesha Benne Dosai Shop, B'luru-560050 have changed my name to Manikanda Muthu Rathinam.

I, Naseer Ahmed Baba Jan R/o No.41, 1st Cross, Sadiq Masjid Road, Thanisandra Main Road, Aswath Nagar, Dr. Shivarama Karanth Nagar post, Bangalore 560077 have changed my name as Naseer Ahmed

I, Naseer Ahmed Baba Jan R/o No.41, 1st Cross, Sadiq Masjid Road, Thanisandra Main Road, Aswath Nagar, Dr. Shivarama Karanth Nagar post, Bangalore 560077 have changed my name as Naseer Ahmed

I, Khamer Mushtaq Also Known as Khamer Taj, R/o No 344 6th Block Koramangala Bangalore 560095, Have Change My Name to Khamer Mushtaq for All Purpose

I, Sasmita Tunga Samanta R/o No 75/15, 2nd Main Road, Marenahalli Tank Road, Jayanagar,Bengaluru-560041 Have Changed My Name To Sashmita Mallick.

I, Baby alias Petchiammal M W/o Suresh Babu R/o 5003, Sobha Silicon Oasis Hosa Rd Electronic City ,Ph-2 B'lore-560100 have changed my name to Petchiammal.

I, SRIDHARA SESHADRI, Residing at No 173, 6th B Main, 4th Phase, JP Nagar, Bangalore-560078, Have changed our minor daughter name SAMHITHA SRIDHAR to SAMHITHA JOIS, vide affidavit dated 16/06/2025 sworn before Notary Aravind Patil G.G Bangalore

I, SYED REHMAN, R/a.#227, 31st A Cross, Near Sanjay Gandhi Hospital Tilak Nagar Bengaluru-04. I, have Changed my name to SYED RAHMAN, Vide affidavit, dated 16/06/2025 Sworn before Notary: Meer Hussain. Bangalore

I, Deepak Mehrotra R/o Flat No 212, Ssvr Crescent, Kaithota Main Road Nagondanahalli, Bengaluru 560066, Karnataka, India have changed my minor daughter's name from Roshni Deepak Mehrotra to Roshni Mehrotra.

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15–18-year-olds are the most active mobile users

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

phones daily. Platforms like YouTube, WhatsApp, and Instagram reels dominate their screen time, often replacing outdoor or creative activities.

Older adolescents were found to be more engaged in texting, video calls, and social media posting, behaviours that increase their exposure to online predators. The report also noted that boys and urban children tend to have higher screen time compared to girls and those in rural areas.

Instances of children turning aggressive or even harming family members when denied access to gadgets were also reported. Fatigue from online classes, rising anxiety, and the use of fake profiles to access risky content were among other concerns raised.

"This is not just a technology issue, it's a parenting and policy challenge," said Legislative Council Chairman Basavaraj S Horatti, who inaugurated the event. "From fake accounts to private photos being shared, the threats are real. Awareness must start at home, and parents need to stay vigilant."

Naganna Gowda, Chairperson of the Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, stressed on the need to limit screen time and promote creativity and outdoor activities to combat growing digital dependency. "Children are increasingly falling into the trap of online addiction, leading to reduced memory, creativity, and overall well-being. We must collectively work towards curbing this trend," he said.

NH Konareddy, Chairperson of the Women and Child Welfare Committee of the Karnataka Legislature, who also presided over the event, echoed similar concerns. "Online abuse is rising at an alarming rate. We must come together, parents, schools, and policymakers, to safeguard our children's future," he said.

Lakshmi K, a first-year college student from Mysuru, highlighted how unrestricted access to mobile phones among students is leading to serious issues such as health problems, the spread of fake messages, and even incidents of blackmail. "We often say it's for educational purposes, but in reality, many don't use it that way," she noted.

Officials emphasised on the urgent need to incorporate online safety and the dangers of digital addiction into the school syllabus. They also called for a collaborative approach involving parents, educators, and the government to ensure the safety and well-being of children in today's digital world.

Officials also stressed that the concept of online classes for school children should be reconsidered or even banned, as younger students are more vulnerable to online abuse and are often more curious to explore the internet unsupervised. However, they added that this matter is still under discussion.

HEALTH TIP: After your meal, chew on some gum for ten minutes as one of the home remedies for indigestion

Very dense in nutrients, dried figs are great for maintenance of bone health

GO SKIN DEEP

What actually happens to my skin when I have really, really hot shower or bath?

As the weather gets cooler, many of us turn to hot showers and baths to warm up and wind down.

But what actually happens to your skin when you have really hot showers or baths?

Your largest organ

Your skin is your largest organ, and has two distinct parts: the epidermis on the outside, and the dermis on the inside.

The epidermis is made up of billions of cells that lay in four layers in thin skin (such as on your eyelids) and five layers in thick skin (such as the on sole of your foot).

The cells (keratinocytes) in the deeper layers are held together by tight junctions. These cellular bridges make waterproof joins between neighbouring cells.

The cells on the outside of the epidermis have lost these cellular bridges and slough off at a rate of about 1,000 cells per one centimetre squared of skin per hour. For an average adult, that's 17 million cells per hour, every day.

Under the epidermis is the dermis, where we have blood vessels, nerves, hair follicles, pain receptors, pressure receptors and sweat glands.

Together, the epidermis and dermis (the skin):

- protect you from ultraviolet radiation from the Sun
- synthesise vitamin D3, which helps your intestines absorb calcium
- protect you against bacteria, parasites, fungi and viruses
- regulate your body temperature via the dilation of blood vessels and sweat glands releasing sweat
- help display how we're feeling (think, for example, of blushing or goosebumps)
- allow us to feel sensations such as touch, pressure, pain and temperature.

So, your skin is important and worth looking after.

Washing daily can help prevent disease, and really hot baths often feel lovely and can help you relax. That said, there are some potential downsides.

The skin microbiota

Normally we have lots of healthy organisms called Staphyloccocus epidermis on the skin. These help increase the integrity of our skin layers (they make the bonds between cells stronger) and stimulate production of anti-microbial proteins.

These little critters like an acidic environment, such as the skin's normal pH of between 4-6.

If the skin pH increases to around 7 (neutral), Staphyloccocus epidermis' nasty cousin Staphyloccocus aureus – also known as golden staph – will try to take over and cause infections.

Having a hot shower or bath can increase your skin's pH, which may ultimately benefit golden staph.

Being immersed in really hot water also pulls a lot of moisture from your dermis, and makes you lose water via sweat.

This makes your skin drier, and causes your kidneys to excrete more water, making more urine.

Staying in a hot bath for a long time can reduce your blood pressure, but increase your heart rate. People with low blood pressure or heart problems should speak to their doctor before having a long hot shower or bath.

Heat from the shower or bath can activate the release of cytokines (inflammatory molecules), histamines (which are involved in allergic reactions), and increase the number of sensory nerves. All of this can lead to itchiness after a very hot shower or bath.

Some people can get hives (itchy raised bumps that look red on lighter skin and brown or purple on darker skin) after hot showers or baths, which is a form of chronic inducible urticaria. It's fairly rare and is usually managed with antihistamines.

People with sensitive skin or chronic skin conditions such as urticaria, dermatitis, eczema, rosacea, psoriasis or acne should avoid really hot showers or baths. They dry out the skin and leave these people more prone to flare ups.

The skin on your hands or feet is least sensitive to hot and cold, so always use your wrist, not your hands, to test water temperature if you're bathing a child, older person, or a disabled person.

The skin on your buttocks is the most sensitive to hot and cold. This is why sometimes you think the bath is OK when you first step in, but once you sit down it burns your bum.

You might have heard women like hotter water temperature than men but that's not really supported by the research evidence. However, across your own body you have highly variable areas of thermal sensitivity, and everyone is highly variable, regardless of sex.

Making the most of moisturising

Moisturising after a hot bath or shower can help, but check if your moisturiser is up to the task.

To improve the skin barrier, your moisturiser needs to contain a mix of:

- an emollient such as ceramides, squalanes or dimethicone (emollients incorporate themselves into the lipid barrier in the epidermis to reduce water loss)
- a humectant such as glycerin or hyaluronic acid (humectants draw moisture from the dermis into the epidermis)
- an occlusive such as petroleum jelly or Vaseline, mineral oil, or cocoa butter (occlusives reduce water loss through the skin and increase the production of anti-microbial peptides).

Not all moisturisers are actually good at reducing the moisture loss from your skin. You still might experience dryness and itchiness as your skin recovers if you've been having a lot of really hot showers and baths.

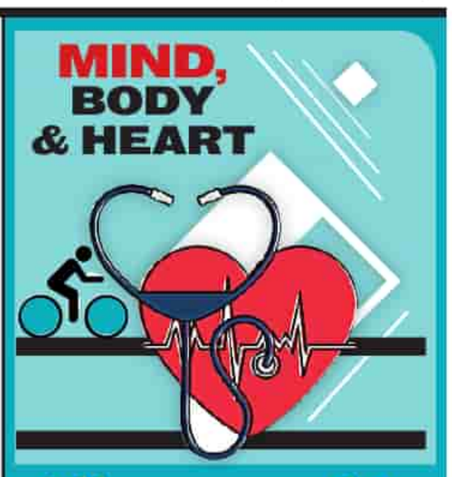
I'm itchy again, what should I do?

If you're itching after a hot shower or bath, try taking cooler, shorter showers and avoid reusing sponges, loofahs, or washcloths (which may harbour bacteria).

You can also try patting your skin dry, instead of rubbing it with a towel. Applying a hypoallergenic moisturising cream, like sorbolene, to damp skin can also help.

If your symptoms don't improve, see your doctor.

(By Amanda Meyer and Monika Zimanyi, James Cook University, The Conversation)



All you need to know about...

Rheumatoid arthritis

13% rise rise

Rheumatoid arthritis affected nearly 18 million people worldwide in 2021 -- an over 13 per cent rise in cases since 1990, a study has found.

According to the study, more young people are being diagnosed with this disease, which became geographically widespread with time.

What is RA

Rheumatoid arthritis, a chronic autoimmune condition, occurs when the body's immune system mistakenly attacks its healthy tissues, especially those in joints, leading to inflammation, pain and stiffness.

Region-wise

The study, published in the journal Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases, found that population growth impacted the disease's burden in most countries, including India, Pakistan and Spain, while ageing impacted the most in Thailand, China and Poland.

The regions high on the sociodemographic index were hit the hardest, while those low witnessed an increase, it said.

"While previous Global Burden of Disease (GBD) studies have provided important insights, they have largely focused on high-level descriptions and visualisations at global and national scales, failing to capture local disparities or the dynamic interactions between socioeconomic development and disease trends," said principal investigator Queran Lin from Imperial College London. "In 2021, RA (rheumatoid arthritis) affected 17.9 million people globally, with a 13.2 per cent increase in incidence rate from 1990-2021, trending younger and broader," the authors wrote.

Disease burden

They were "able to generate the most granular disease burden estimates to date, offering a new framework for guiding precision public health across diverse populations", Lin said.

The study also projected that the regions with a low-middle sociodemographic index could see an increase in burden by 2040 due to ageing and population growth, while the burden in regions high on the index could decrease. **PTI**

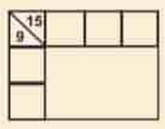
Chai-Time

SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

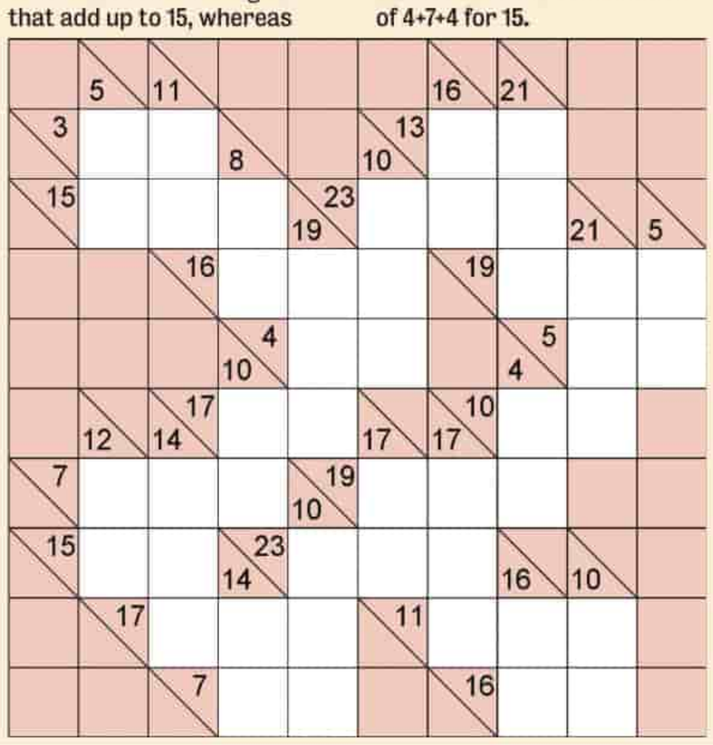
((-3^2) – (-√16)^2 – (-√25)) / -(-3)^2 + (-1)^7)
= ?

Kakuro

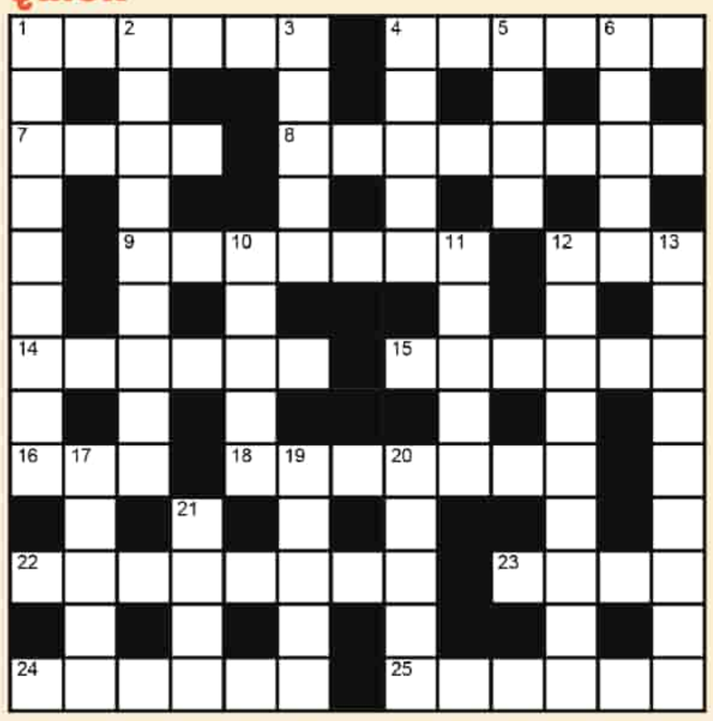
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 First class (6)
4 Former Karnataka Governor who went on to become India's President (1,1,4)
7 Lacklustre (4)
8 Ace pines anagram for wisdom? (8)
9 Business matters (7)
12 Old time movie Anokhi ___ (3)
14 Remain aloft? (4,2)
15 Length of time (6)
16 As late as or until (3)
18 Analyse; examine (7)
22 First Indian C-in-C of the Indian army (8)
23 Make coins (4)
24 Securely balanced (6)
25 ___ down : made a written note of? (6)

DOWN

1 In a dull and boring manner (9)
2 Dismantle (4,5)
3 Turkish title (5)
4 A poisonous snake (5)
5 Developed (4)
6 Hurried (5)
10 Discovered (5)
11 Colander (5)
12 Too much to put up with? (1,3,5)
13 Casted off, relinquished (9)
17 Make into law (5)
19 State indirectly (5)
20 Mass of bees (5)
21 Prima donna (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: P EQUALS I

KXKBCVLK NOD O BPSNJ JV O RLPXKBDPJC YKSBKK PL OQKBPIO, KXKL PA PJ'D PL NOQHRBSKB JKINLVEVSC.

Linemaro

Can you tell me a bedtime story and tuck me in?

Mindchow

Man is always looking for someone to boast to; woman is always looking for a shoulder to put her head on

Joke of the day

Animals may be our friends...but they won't pick you up at the airport

Loop

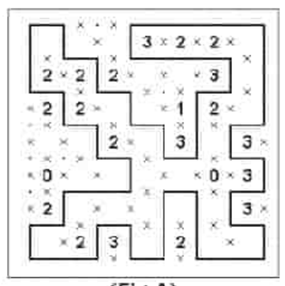
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

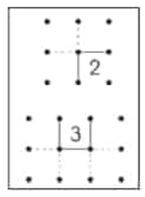
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

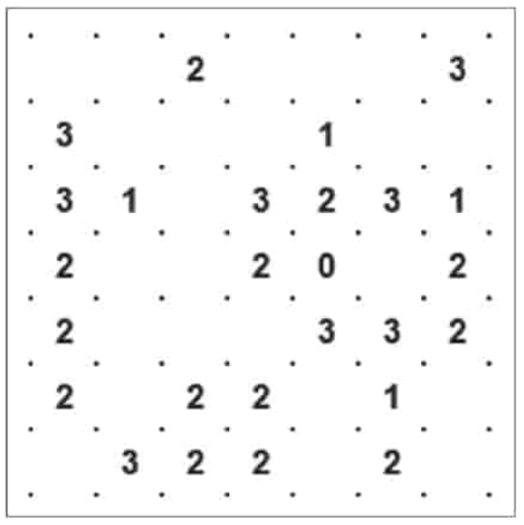
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



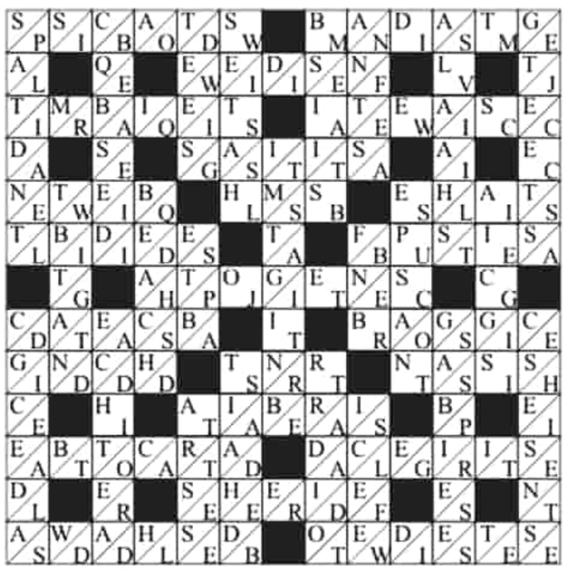
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
9 K				

ACROSS

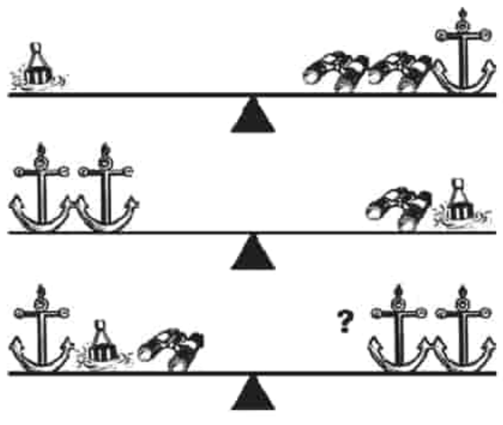
1 Chert; 6 Ree Nu; 7 Max id; 8 As mum; 9 De Key

DOWN

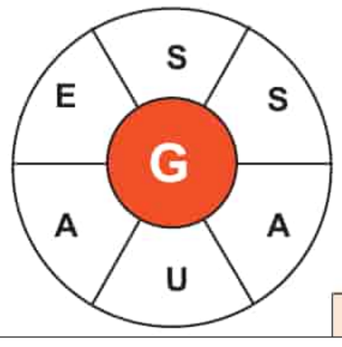
1 Asker; 2 E dune; 3 My tum; 4 Mr Ice; 5 Ax he'd

Mensapuzzle

Which symbol is needed to make the scales balance?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

05 Average; **06** Good; **08** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

			6		5	8	1	
								3
8		4	7		3			
1	3	8					4	
	5	6				9	8	
	4					1	3	7
			3		8	5		4
3								
	2	1	9		7			

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 11

2 4 6 7

Medium = 21

2 5 5 9

Hard = 25

2 5 5 5

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

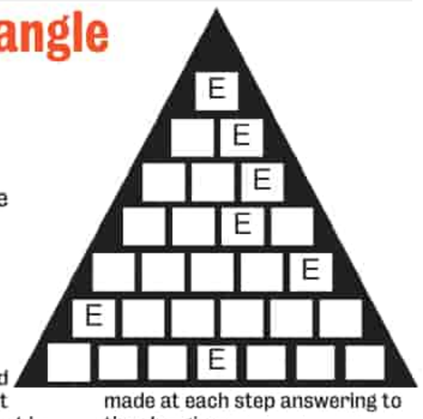
Differences: 1. Bag is larger. 2. Envelope is moved. 3. Bush is larger. 4. House is wider. 5. Mouth is open. 6. Fence board is shorter.

Riddler

What common phrase does this rebus represent?
SKIN B-U-T SKIN SKIN SKIN FLESH FLESH FLESH FLESH MUSCLE MUSCLE MUSCLE BONE BONE BONE BONE

Alpha triangle

1 Second vowel
2 South East, abbr.
3 Take legal action
4 Amounts owed
5 Quench
6 A mass departure
7 Dinner jackets

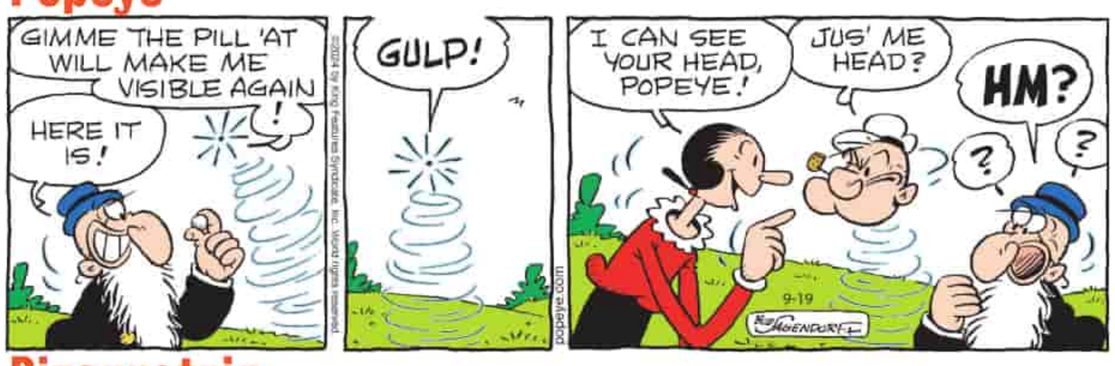


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye



Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

I HEARD YOU'RE GOING TO ASK LEE TO BE YOUR TRAINING GIRLFRIEND. BEST OF LUCK, KAT.
YOU ALREADY KNOW?! IT'S BEEN LESS THAN 24 HOURS!
OH, I KNEW AGES AGO.
DEAN
KAT'S GONNA ASK LEE TO BE HER TRAINING GIRLFRIEND.
DO YOU THINK HEART WILL BE MY +1 TO THE WEDDING?

Crankshaft

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you may find yourself engaged in family gatherings and social events. Your polite and pleasant demeanor will enhance your reputation among those around you. You could spend on decorative or household items that elevate your social standing. Good news from a relative is likely to brighten your day.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
The day brings family reunions and opportunities to reconnect with your network, which may prove beneficial soon. Those in glamour, arts, fashion, film, or media may initiate new ventures in their careers. Students are likely to perform well, and couples will enjoy joyful, romantic moments together.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
A demanding work schedule may leave you mentally exhausted, affecting your daily rhythm. You may build new connections overseas. Exercise caution in financial investments. Employees may receive a promotion or recognition for their contributions.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Things are falling into place today. Past investments may start yielding returns, and your efforts could be rewarded. Projects that were unexpectedly halted may resume. A peaceful, spiritually enriching journey is on the cards, and you may feel inclined to donate to religious or charitable causes.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
The Moon's unfavourable position may affect your health and financial stability. Losses in business or past investments are possible. Avoid new investments and steer clear of unnecessary spending or controversies, as these could impact your reputation or finances negatively.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Your professional life is likely to progress smoothly today. You may take on new responsibilities or receive a promotion. Conflicts with partners could be resolved, and you might consider financial investments related to your children's future. Your child's health is also set to improve.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, you're blessed by the Moon. Love and harmony will prevail in your personal life. Singles may find a suitable match, and professionals will perform well with strong support from friends and colleagues. Investments in gems or jewelry might bring good returns. However, be mindful of the health of elderly family members.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Auspicious planetary influences bring happiness and a boost to your social status. Your energy and charisma will earn you admiration. You may feel drawn toward reading or engaging in intellectual pursuits that enrich your knowledge.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Sagittarius:
The day may begin on a sluggish note, but things will improve by evening. New professional contacts may help you rethink and revamp your business strategies. Be cautious and thoroughly review any documents before signing them.

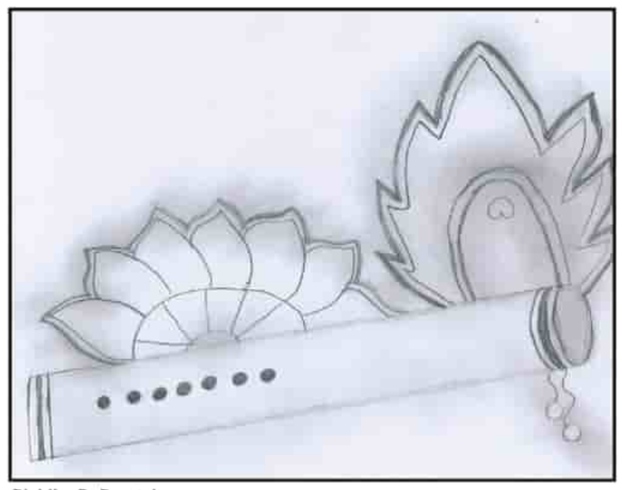
Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
With divine blessings, you'll be able to overcome indecisiveness. Your child's health shows improvement, and colleagues may support you at work, helping you complete a project successfully. A bonus or incentive with your salary is possible. Those in fields like dairy, water resources, grains, home decor, or arts may see positive outcomes.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
You might consider relocating or changing your job today. Take time to weigh your options before making any decisions. A sense of inner peace will help you stay centred, though your child's health could cause some concern. Avoid speculative investments, and couples should exercise patience before taking major steps like marriage.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Patience will be your strength today. Meditation may enhance your concentration, allowing you to work more efficiently and meet deadlines. Support from subordinates will aid in project completion. Short work-related travel is possible. An influential figure may assist in expanding your professional network.

KIDZONE

Prakriti V, Bengaluru



Rishika B, Bengaluru

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Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
= (-9-16-(-5)) / -9+ (-1))
= -20 / -10
= 2

RIDDLER
Beauty is only skin deep. When spoken quickly the letters B-U-T sound like the word "beauty," and "B-U-T" is only as deep as the word "SKIN" is.

FAST FIVE

R	E	T	C	H
E	N	U	R	E
A	D	M	I	X
S	U	M	M	A
K	E	Y	E	D

BULL'S EYE
ague, ASSUAGE, gauss, guess, saga, sage, sausage, usage

STRIKE OUT

P	I	C	O	T	S	■	M	A	D	A	M	E	■	■
L	■	E	■	W	I	D	E	N	■	V	■	J	■	■
I	R	A	Q	I	S	■	A	T	E	A	S	E	■	■
A	S	■	G	A	I	T	S	■	I	■	■	C	■	■
N	W	E	B	■	L	M	S	■	S	L	A	T	■	■
T	I	D	E	S	■	A	■	F	U	S	E	S	■	■
■	■	G	■	A	P	O	G	E	E	S	■	G	■	■
A	D	D	L	E	D	■	T	W	I	S	T	S	■	■

QUICK

S	T	E	A	D	Y	■	M	A	R	K	E	D	■	■
■	■	C	■	V	■	L	■	R	■	■	■	E	■	■
C	A	R	I	A	P	P	A	■	M	I	N	T	■	■
N	■	D	■	M	■	W	■	H	■	■	■	A	■	■
Y	E	T	■	D	I	S	S	E	C	T	■	C	■	■
L	■	R	■	N	■	■	■	V	■	T	■	I	■	■
S	T	A	Y	U	P	■	P	E	R	I	O	D	■	■
U	■	P	■	O	■	■	■	I	■	B	■	B	■	■
O	■	A	F	F	A	I	R	S	■	A	D	A	■	■
I	■	L	■	H	■	E	■	W	■	E	■	■	■	■
D	U	L	L	■	S	A	P	I	E	N	C	E	■	■
E	■	U	■	A	■	I	■	R	■	A	■	■	■	■
T	I	P	T	O	P	■	V	V	G	I	R	I	■	■

MENSA PUZZLE
Anchor: The Binoculars = 1, the Anchor = 3 and the Buoy = 5

QUOTE UNCODE
Everyone has a right to a university degree in America, even if it's in Hamburger Technology.

SUDOKU

2	7	3	6	4	5	8	1	9
5	6	9	8	2	1	4	7	3
8	1	4	7	9	3	2	5	6
9	4	2	5	8	6	1	3	7
7	5	6	1	3	4	9	8	2
1	3	8	2	7	9	6	4	5
6	9	7	3	1	8	5	2	4
3	8	5	4	6	2	7	9	1
4	2	1	9	5	7	3	6	8

ALPHA TRIANGLE
E, SE, Sue, Dues, Douse, Exodus, Tuxedos.

GO FIGURE
Easy
2 + 7 + 6 – 4 = 11
Medium
5 + 9 + 5 + 2 = 21
Hard
5 x 2 – 5 x 5 = 25

LOOP

KAKURO

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SANDALWOOD SHOTS

Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Family drama

Director Manju Kavi, who debuted as a director with Temper, is set to handle the megaphone for his fourth movie RR77 shortly. A puja was performed recently to announce the title of his fourth movie.

"RR77 will convey a message to society, especially to youth, on the importance of family bonds. I have also included the important problem of senior citizens whose children are abroad," said Kavi.

The director said that one unfortunate incident took place in his friend's family. "I do not want to reveal my friend's name and give details of the incident. The movie will emphasise the importance of couples trying to lead happy lives," the director said.

He thanked producer DP Venkatesh for agreeing to bankroll the movie. "I was very happy when Venkatesh told me that he liked the script. I am sure Kannada moviegoers will enjoy this film because its script is unique," he said.

Dr Rajveer is playing the lead in the movie. "I selected Dr Rajveer as he suits to play that character," he said.

Shooting wraps up

The shooting of The Rise of Ashoka is completed and its post-production works are in progress. Earlier, the title of the movie was Ashok Blade and the movie went on floors in May 2023. Sathish Ninasam plays the lead while Vinod V Dhondalay was to direct the film. But Dhondalay passed away after directing a major portion of the movie.

Sathish Ninasam and the team members decided to complete the shooting. They also changed the title of the movie set in the 1970s. It has created curiosity among moviegoers as the movie is billed as one of big-budget movies in Satish Ninasam's acting career. Its shooting was held in Srirangapatna, Nanjangud, Gundlupet, and in and around Bengaluru. Ninasam plays a man, who fought against people responsible for atrocities and exploitation of the downtrodden.

Kantara fame Saptami Gowda is paired opposite Satish Ninasam. The team members released a poster of the movie that shows Ninasam in a rugged look. The movie features B Suresh, Ravi Shankar, Gopal Krishna Deshpande, Sampath Maithriya, Yash Shetty and others.

Back to the struggle

15 years after big break, Nawazuddin once again in struggler's role

For Nawazuddin Siddiqui, the story of struggle isn't just a chapter in his life—it's the foundation of his entire journey. Though he technically made his big-screen debut in John Matthew Matthan's Sarfarosh back in 1999, Nawazuddin's true moment under the spotlight arrived much later, in 2012, with Anurag Kashyap's Gangs of Wasseypur – Part 2. That film didn't just launch him—it rewrote his destiny.

But it took him fourteen long years to get there. Years filled with rejection, hardship, and relentless hustle. That deep-seated experience of battling through the fringes of the film industry has shaped the actor he is today, making him uniquely connected to roles that capture the essence of the underdog.

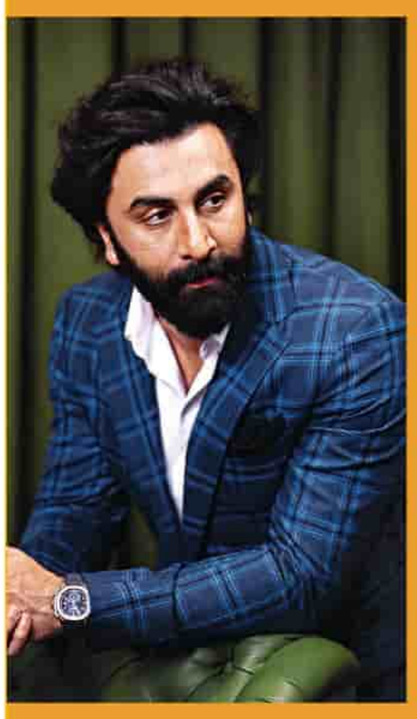
> "I was a struggling actor for 12-15 years. I am struggling still, in different ways

In fact, Nawaz's uncanny ability to embody struggling artists was already evident in Dibakar Banerjee's Star from the 2013 anthology Bombay Talkies. The role fit him like a second skin—it didn't feel like acting; it felt like reliving.

Now, over a decade since his breakout, Nawazuddin is stepping back into familiar territory with 'Main Actor Nahi Hoon' (which translates to I'm Not An Actor), directed by Aditya Kripalani. This time, he plays a man who, despite living in Germany, works as an acting coach for a woman in Mumbai—their entire connection unfolding through FaceTime calls. The film promises to explore ambition, mentorship, and identity through a unique storytelling format that mirrors today's hyper-digital world.

For Nawazuddin, stepping into the mind space of a struggling actor still feels instinctive. In a candid conversation with SCREEN magazine, he shared, "It's very easy because that phase was very long. I was a struggling actor for 12-15 years. I'm still struggling, though in different ways. But yes, when you have first-hand experience, it becomes quite easy to play a character.

ETimes



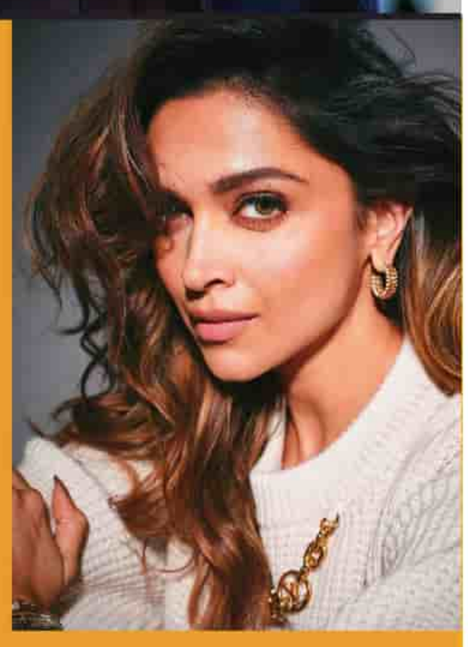
Moving on with grace

Who doesn't remember the sizzling romance between Deepika Padukone and Ranbir Kapoor? While the two eventually found lasting love elsewhere—Deepika with Ranveer Singh and Ranbir with Alia Bhatt—and both are now proud parents of baby girls, their past relationship still holds a special place in Bollywood's collective memory.

Deepika and Ranbir's love story began in 2008 on the sets of Bachna Ae Haseeno. Both were fresh faces in the industry: Deepika had made a dream debut opposite Shah Rukh Khan in Om Shanti Om (2007), while Ranbir had stepped into the limelight with Saawariya (2007). Their romance blossomed quickly and publicly—they walked red carpets hand in hand, gave joint interviews. But in 2009, just a year after going public, their relationship came to an end. Both stars handled the aftermath with maturity.

What stood out was not the breakup, but how gracefully they moved on—not just personally, but professionally. They went on to star together in two iconic films: Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani (2013) and Tamasha (2015). In a 2011 interview with Rediff, Deepika shared her thoughts on their evolved relationship: "We are in a very friendly and comfortable space. He will always be special to me, not just because of what we shared, but because of who he is as a person."

—ETimes



Too pricey

Actress Nupur Sanon, sister of Kriti Sanon, has landed in hot water on social media after people came across her fashion brand's website. The brand is being called out for selling "basic" looking clothes at sky-high prices. While some users were simply confused, others didn't hold back from calling the whole thing a scam.

The main issue most people had was with the pricing. On the website, even the cheapest dress is around Rs 7,000. A kurta set, which many thought looked quite ordinary, is priced at Rs 26,500. In fact, most of the outfits on the site range from Rs 8,000 to Rs 12,000 – and they don't seem to be anything special.

Netizens took to Reddit to express their frustration. Screenshots from the site show an asymmetrical dress listed at Rs 10,900 and a maxi dress for Rs 10,700. Some of the mini dresses, jumpsuits and rompers also cost between Rs 9,000 to Rs 12,000. For most, this pricing made no sense. They felt the clothes looked like fast fashion and didn't have the kind of design, material or creativity to justify the high price tags.

Social media was flooded with jokes, memes."

—ETimes

Pitt & Cruise: Conditions apply

Actor Brad Pitt expressed interest in acting opposite fellow actor Tom Cruise as long as the role doesn't require death-defying aerial stunts, reported E! News.

The two A-listers famously starred together in the 1994 horror drama "Interview With the Vampire." and have never reunited on screen afterwards.

In an interview with E! News at the Mexican premiere of his upcoming film 'F1', Pitt referred to the popular aeroplane stunt of Cruise and said he is willing to do a movie with the latter only if the stunts are performed on the ground.

"Well, I'm not gonna hang my ass off airplanes and shit like that," Pitt said with a laugh when asked about working with Cruise again. "So when he does something again that's on the ground, [then yes]," Pitt told E! News.

—ANI